



## North Dakota Immunization Program Vaccine Loss Policy

Current state and federal vaccine contracts stipulate that spoiled or expired vaccines cannot be returned to the manufacturer for credit or replacement. Such vaccine losses are absorbed directly by our program's budget. Since the Prevention Partnership Program is so important to the health and well-being of North Dakota children, it is essential that all of us work together to ensure that every dose of vaccine is used to provide protection against disease in susceptible children. As a provider responsible for state-supplied vaccines, you or your staff should continually monitor vaccine storage and handling practices. Please notify the North Dakota Immunization Program if you or your staff would like to receive an educational visit regarding vaccine storage and handling.

Prevention Partnership Providers are required to report all wasted, expired, spoiled, or lost vaccine to the North Dakota Immunization Program. This document serves as the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) Immunization Program's policy for management of incidents that result in loss of state-supplied vaccine. Reimbursement for state-supplied vaccine will be requested if wastage was due to the provider's failure to properly store, handle, or rotate vaccine inventory.

### Definitions

**Wasted:** Any vaccine that cannot be used. This includes expired, spoiled, and lost vaccines.

**Expired:** Any vaccine with an expiration date that has passed.

**Spoiled:** Any vaccine that exceeds the limits of the approved cold chain procedures or is pre-drawn and not used within acceptable time frames. Always consult with the NDDoH before determining that the vaccine is non-viable.

**Lost:** United States Postal Service (USPS) does not deliver the vaccine or does not deliver in a timely manner.

### Situations That Require Financial Restitution

#### **Expired Vaccine**

- Failure to rotate or transfer vaccine that results in expired vaccine, which amounts to greater than \$500 according to the current Center's for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) price. Prices are listed at [www.cdc.gov/nip/vfc/cdc\\_vac\\_price\\_list.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vfc/cdc_vac_price_list.htm).

#### **Spoiled Vaccine**

- Pre-drawn vaccine that is not used. Please note the North Dakota Immunization Program strongly discourages the practice of pre-drawing vaccine.
- Handling and storage mishaps by provider staff.
- Vaccine that is left out of the refrigerator or freezer and becomes non-viable. Call the North Dakota Immunization Program first to help you determine the stability/viability of vaccine left out of the refrigerator/freezer.

- Freezing vaccine that is supposed to be refrigerated.
- Refrigerating vaccine that is supposed to be frozen.
- Refrigerator/freezer left unplugged.
- Refrigerator/freezer door left open or ajar.
- Refrigerator/freezer equipment problems where proof or repair or equipment replacement is not provided to the North Dakota Immunization Program within 30 days from the date you became aware of the situation.
- Non-weather related power outages in which the provider fails to take precautions.
- Replacement vaccine: health care providers who must re-vaccinate due to negligence in failure to keep vaccine viable (temperatures out of acceptable range) or improper administration will be responsible for the current CDC cost of the vaccine needed to re-vaccinate.
- Vaccine that is considered spoiled due to the provider not checking refrigerator and freezer temperatures twice a day.

### **Situations That Do Not Require Financial Restitution**

Below is a list of situations that are NOT considered “provider negligence.” This list is not exhaustive. In these situations, the provider is deemed not to be at fault. You may be required to produce a letter from the alarm/alert company or the power company.

- USPS does not deliver to the provider in a timely manner. Before making the determination that the vaccine is non-viable, first call the North Dakota Immunization Program.
- A provider who has a contract with an alert/alarm company has a refrigerator that malfunctions, and the alarm/alert company does not notify the provider.
- A provider moves vaccine to a nearby hospital due to anticipated inclement weather, the hospital experiences a power failure, and the North Dakota Immunization Program later deems the vaccine not viable.
- Power was interrupted or discontinued due to a storm, and after consultation with the North Dakota Immunization Program it is determined that vaccine is not viable.
- Partially used multi-dose vials.
- A vial that is accidentally dropped or broken by a provider.
- Vaccine that is drawn at the time of the visit, but not administered, due to parental refusal or a change in physician orders.
- Expired vaccine that is not due to provider negligence (including seasonal influenza vaccine)
- Extraordinary situations not listed above which are deemed by the North Dakota Immunization Program to be beyond the provider’s control.
- Refrigerator/freezer equipment problems where proof or repair or equipment replacement is provided to the North Dakota Immunization Program within 30 days from the date you became aware of the situation.

### **Procedures For Financial Restitution**

This updated policy applies to any vaccine received as wasted by the North Dakota Immunization Program on or after August 1, 2006.

- The provider will receive an invoice from the NDDoH for vaccine reported as wasted to the North Dakota Immunization Program.
- The invoice will reflect the current CDC cost of the vaccine, minus the excise tax credit.
- Reimbursement for the cost of the vaccine is due within 30 days of receiving the invoice.
- If reimbursement is not received within 30 days, the North Dakota Immunization Program will no longer supply vaccine to the negligent provider.

### **Procedures and Policy For Returning Vaccine To The North Dakota Immunization Program**

- Proper cold chain procedures must be used when returning viable vaccine to the North Dakota Immunization Program.
- Call the North Dakota Immunization Program as soon as you suspect vaccine may be spoiled and prior to returning any vaccine.
- Failure to report wasted vaccine to the NDDoH may result in your facility being no longer able to receive state-supplied vaccine.
- Return all open and unopened vials and manufacturer's pre-filled syringes of spoiled or expired vaccine with a completed North Dakota Return Form to the Immunization Branch, regardless of any financial restitution status applied to the vaccine. Vaccine provided by the NDDoH should never be discarded.

If you have any questions concerning this policy, please call the North Dakota Immunization Program at 701.328.3386 or toll-free at 800.472.2180.